

**Leon Markiewicz, Boleslaw Szabelski. Jego iycie i dzieło [His Life and Work], Katowice 1991.**

Many years the author was working on Boleslaw Szabelski (1896-1979) - the great teacher of composition in the Katowice area: a senior of the "Silesian School of Composition" and tutor of many generations of composers. His tradition and "spirit" have influenced many known contemporary composers such as Henryk Mikolaj Gorecki and his students.

Markiewicz's book is supplemented with interviews, archival and press material, correspondence, personal papers and his notes made during the whole time in which he was participating in Szabelski's life and work. Markiewicz was organ and composition student of Szabelski at the Katowice College.

The book is arranged chronologically and the events of Szabelski life are interlarded with presentations of his works. The monograph aspect is completed by „a look at Szabelski“: statements and opinions from his students and friends.

There is a musicological treatment of Szabelski's work in the chapter "Deep into music - attempt at sythesis".

The Boleslaw Szabelski thematic catalogue is an integral part of the monograph, and it is presented for the first time. It is extremely important for the Polish literature and especially for the Silesian region.

The first eight chapters of the book are devoted to Szabelski's biography, the ninth chapter presents his work and is very interesting. The author makes a general synthesis of Szabelski's work regarding the work process and the aesthetic aspect. Markiewicz devides Szabelski's work into two phases: His school compositions as well as his works during the thirties and fourties up to 1957 belong to his first composition period in which he wrote thematically. In his second writing period Szabelski is working with athematic material, partially making use of the dodekaphony. This period is devided by Markiewicz into two phases (1958-1966 and 1966-1979).

After that Markiewicz presents Szabelski's characteristic features as a composer: the symphony as "a primary category of his creative imagination" (p. 139 - Szabelski is the author of five symphonies), the range of musical narrative plans of development, factual treatment and a concerting texture of musical work, the speciality of dynamic tension forming, a frequent successive polymetry, particular dissonance of harmonic sequences, harmonic polycentres, polyphony of instrument groups which is typical for him, harmonic percussive function (p. 149), high degree of atonality, brass instrument preference.

The investigation of Szabelski's formal evolution is very interesting: beginning with the compositions of classical-romantic origin or the compositions connected with his favourite baroque epoch (he uses the forms of the passacaglia,

concerto grosso, fuga) up to the one-part compositions not related to any former formal scheme. It is worth to stress the fact that Szabelski avoids the sonata allegro arrangement and he doesn't have any regard for transformation. Further symptomatic idioms of Szabelski work are his free understanding of forms and the intersection of them. His famous "motto" is a "motive-phrase constellation in which there is a peculiar play of antagonistic dynamic-rhythmic colouristic forces" (p. 155). It's a mean of form making in the athematic period, called this way by the composer himself.

After the review of differentiated composing phases Markiewicz points out three indispensable discriminants, which are independent of the composing phases and distinguish Szabelski's metier from among the others during that time: expression of dynamic-sound tensions, the rule of non-recurrence of musical forms and the rule of contrast (pp.160-162).

This panoramic synthesis supported by details on Szabelski's work process is very valuable not only considering the presentation of the great composer's whole work in its natural metamorphosis but also as a model for similar recapitulations. There are references, a list of Szabelski's compositions, an index of authors and their works. The edition is designed for students of music so there are many musical examples. The biographical part can be seen as a guide of contemporary art.

The good point of the book is not only the fact that it is the only academic monograph concerning the Polish distinguished composer but also its popular language and the logic of exposition. The region of Silesia has got another academic work in the field of our music. Many composing talents of this century also deserve a closer look, such as Michal Spisak, Boleslaw Szabelski and Boleslaw-Woytowicz, Henryk Górecki, Wojciech Kilar, Eugeniusz Knapik and others.

**Jolanta Bauman-Szulakowska**

**Jolanta Bauman-Szulakowska, Muzyka symfoniczna kompozytorów górno -  
laskich w latach 1945 – 1979 na podstawie wybranych utworów [Sinfonische  
Musik der oberschlesischen Komponisten in den Jahren 1945-1979 anhand  
der im Druck erschienenen Werke], Katowice 1993.**

Mit Beginn der 30er Jahren dieses Jahrhunderts, d.h. seit der Gründung des Konservatoriums in Katowice durch Witold Friemann im Jahre 1929, bildet die klassizistische und romantische Dichotomie die Grundlage und den Kern der Entwicklung der schlesischen Sinfonik.